MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN WASHINGTON, D. C., NOVEMBER 13, 1920.

The third meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1921 was held in its office at 1729 New York Avenue, northwest, Washington, D. C., Saturday, November 13, 1920.

The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman;
Mr. Platt;
Mr. Wm. Mitchell Kendall;
Mr. Pope;
Mr. Greenleaf;
Mr. Fraser;

also Major C. S. Ridley, Secretary and Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETINGS: The minutes of the preceding meeting held in Washington, D. C., September 3, 1920, and of the Committee meetings held in New York City September 20 and October 9, 1920, were approved.

2. JEANNE D'ARC MEMORIAL: The Commission decided that a most appropriate site for the statue of Jeanne D'Arc, which is a replica of the Dubois statue in front of Rheims Cathedral, and is to be given to the United States by the Societe des Femmes de France a New York, would be the area in front of the Red Cross Building on Seventeenth Street, northwest.

3. FIRST DIVISION MEMORIAL: Mr. Moore reported that on November 4th Major General C. P. Summerall, Commander of the First Division, called on him for an interview concerning the proposed war memorial for the First Division. General Summerall stated that the First Division has now about $125,000 which they can increase to $150,000 over and above what Congress may appropriate for

the memorial and that they desire the advice of the Commission of Fine Arts as to a site and plans with regard to the designs and sculptor. The Commission tentatively approved General Summerall's recommendation that the memorial be located on the square south of the State, War and Navy Building, subject to legislation by Congress, and recommended that a designer be secured through a program of competition. The Commission also suggested that if the memorial be located there it would be desirable to have it be a fountain in design.

4. SUBMISSION OF SENATOR WILLIAMS: Major Ridley brought to the attention of the Commission correspondence from Senator John Sharp Williams in which he suggested that the Commission of Fine Arts advise regarding the disposition of a statue made by Miss Mary S. Mason, of Elmsford, New York, entitled "Pilgrim Mother and Child", which Miss Mason desired to have erected at Provincetown, Massachusetts, and of another statue entitled "The New Era", which she desired to have erected in Washington. Inquiries recently made at the Capitol failed to disclose any bills introduced in Congress with regard to these statues. The Commission, therefore, concluded that they would have no authority to act in the matter, and requested that Senator Williams be advised accordingly. (Exhibit A).

5. MEMORIAL TABLET, JAPANESE CHERRY TREES: Major Ridley reported that under date of November 3, 1920, he received the following letter from Mr. Paul K. Hisada, of Washington, regarding the proposed tablet to commemorate the gift of the Japanese Cherry Trees:

> "Upon returning from a trip to Japan, I take first opportunity to inform you that the misson your commissioners entrusted with me, regarding the tablet to be placed by Potomac Park along with the cherry trees was handled as well as your commissioners wished in your letter to me, dated July 12, 1920.

I called on Dr. Tajiri, Mayor of Tokyo, also Mr. Masayoshi Kato, chairman of the city council and expressed my wish and your suggestion as to the designs that are to be made there and submitted to your commissioners, showing the order of your preference.

In this letter I can not notify you about this definitely but I have belief that City of Tokyo will take this matter up most favorably and either will communicate with you directly or through me. This is to let you know that this matter received considerable welcome. And those who approved the plan such as Viscount Kaneko and other friends will doubtlessly endeavor to realize our wish.

With kind regard to you and all of your commissioners."

Subsequently Mr. Shuh Tomii of the Japanese Embassy called on Mr. Moore with regard to the matter and requested that they be given advice concerning the design, but suggested that when further action is taken it should go through the Japanese Embassy. The Commission concurred in this and recommended that the memorial be a genuine Japanese work of art of dark stone in the form of a marker or tablet two or three feet in length, or large enough to show inscriptions in English and in Japanese. As for a location it was suggested that a desirable place for this "memorial tablet" would be along the proposed canal across East Potomac Park which is to connect the Potomac River and the Washington Channel, and is to pass through groups of Japanese Cherry Trees. The Ambassador of Japan has been advised in the matter. (Exhibit B).

6. AMERICAN LEGION MEMORIAL, GIFT OF KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS: Mr. Moore reported that under date of October 21, 1920, Attorney John Thomas Taylor, Woodward Building, of this city, Counselor and Chairman of the Committee on Legislation for the American Legion, called and requested an interview concerning the proposed war memorial of the American Legion for which the Knights of Columbus have offered a gift of five million dollars. He stated that they desire advice as to the location and design. Mr. Moore stated that on November 10th he met a committee in the office of Attorney Taylor which included

Brigadier General William E. Harvey of the District Militia, and Colonel E. Lester Jones, Director of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, a high official in the American Legion, and formerly Post Commander. This Committee meeting was called primarily for the purpose of selecting a specific site for the proposed memorial; however, up to the present date the American Legion have not accepted the gift. The Committee urged the importance of erecting the memorial in the city where it would be easily accessible to the members of the American Legion, and to serve as a club-house as similar buildings in other cities rather than simply a Convention Hall. The Committee considered several sites among them one near the Lincoln Memorial, the Dean tract on Mt. Pleasant, a site at Third and T Streets, northeast, and one north of the Carnegie Library at Ninth and K Streets, northwest. The Committee also considered a suggestion made to Mr. Thomas by Mrs. Dimock that they combine theirs with the George Washington Memorial, but the Committee decided that they would prefer to have that memorial develop along its own plans. Mr. Moore advised that after careful consideration of all the proposed sites, the Committee made a tour of inspection and finally selected as the most acceptable site for the proposed memorial the square between Four and one-half and Sixth Streets, northwest, between Pennsylvania Avenue and the Mall, on which the building could be located according to the Mall plan. The Commission gave this matter careful consideration and decided that if Congress shall authorize the use of this site between Four and one-half and Sixth Streets for the proposed memorial the Commission can see no objection to its being located there.

7. PLANS FOR ARLINGTON MANSION: Colonel F. H. Lawton of the Zone Supply Office submitted a final sketch plan for the proposed improvements in the vicinity of the Mansion and in Arlington National Cemetery carefully prepared so as to embody all the recommendations of the Commission covering a period of several

months. The plan was regarded satisfactory by Mr. Greenleaf, landscape architect, and thereupon approved by the Commission. The Commission desires that the plan be approved by the Quartermaster General and the Secretary of War, and that it be used as the official plan in all future work for the improvement of Arlington. (Exhibit C). The Commission urged that the recommendations concerning Arlington contained in their recent letter to Quartermaster General Rogers be carried out as soon as possible.

8. TABLET FOR ST. JOHN'S CHURCH: Major Ridley reported that under date of November 9, 1920, he received the following letter from Colonel C. W. Kutz, Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia, asking advice with regard to a sign for St. John's Church:

> "Last June the Register of St. John's Parish asked permission to place on the parking in front of the church a bronze sign about five feet high and about two feet wide, with movable white letters. Following their general practice the Commissioners declined to grant the request, feeling that it would establish a precedent which might lead to the erection of other signs less pleasing in character. As an alternative they suggested that the sign be affixed to the building. Recently the church authorities advised the Commissioners that the Fine Arts Commission objected to the placing of the sign on the building. If it is the judgment of the Fine Arts Commission that such signs are not objectionable in the public parking, the Commissioners would be glad to be advised of that fact. Any regulation that the Commissioners might adopt on this subject would have to be general in character and would probably have to apply to a theater or place of amusement as well as to a church."

The Commission disapproved the placing of a sign on the parking in front of the church and requested that if a frame or tablet is to be placed on St. John's Church it be designed by the architects who recently restored the Church. (Exhibit D).

9. RESIGNATION OF PROFESSOR WM. SERGEANT KENDALL: Mr. Moore reported that under date of September 22, 1920, he received the following letter of resignation from Professor Wm. Sergeant Kendall, Dean of the School of Fine Arts

at Yale University, and a member of the Commission:

> "I am so troubled by my continued inability to attend the meetings of the Commission of Fine Arts, and so doubtful of matters mending in the near future, that I feel it is my duty to place my resignation in your hands, to take effect at once or whenever you may feel that for the interest of the Commission a new member should be elected in my place.
>
> You will remember that I hesitated before accepting this honor and this opportunity for service, for I feared that my duties as dean in a University, complicated by those of my own professional work, would make me a most unsatisfactory member of the Commission.
>
> I talked over the matter with Herbert Adams, telling him of all the difficulties I foresaw, and of the certainty that the University Committee meetings would often interfere with the meetings of the Commission, but he urged me to accept and do what I could, saying that a painter was only at rare times of importance for the questions to be decided, and that, even with my limitations, he felt I could be of use.
>
> I am forced to the conclusion, however, that a better man should take my place, and therefore tender my resignation, to be acted upon as you find best.
>
> Will you please believe how deeply I have appreciated the honor of my selection, and how much I regret my uselessness."

The Commission expressed their regret at the inability of Professor Kendall to attend the meetings of the Commission, but in compliance with his request accepted his resignation so far as they were concerned. (Exhibit E).

10. REFLECTING POOL, LINCOLN MEMORIAL: Major Ridley reported that in the construction of the pool it has been observed that the west end of the reflecting pool is not parallel with the steps. It was shown that the Capitol-Monument axis at the Lincoln Memorial is fifty-seven minutes and three seconds off the east and west line. The Commission advised that the west end of the reflecting pool should be parallel with the steps. The Commission also suggested bringing the pool a few feet nearer to the Lincoln Memorial. However, Major Ridley advised that a contract for the construction of the pool had been let according to the plan adopted and that it was too late to change the contract

at this time. As for placing the cross-arms on the reflecting pool Major Ridley reported that the present contract calls for the construction of the pool without the cross-arms; but with the provision that they may be built later on should it be found desirable.

11. ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL: Mr. Moore reported that on November 3d Mr. Akeley, sculptor, and Mr. Brite, landscape architect, of the Roosevelt Memorial, and Mr. Page of New York City, were in Washington to visit the proposed site for the Roosevelt Memorial at Sixteenth Street Heights. An inspection trip was made to the site they had selected which is located about five squares to the west of Sixteenth Street, just above Piney Branch adjoining Rock Creek Park. The site appeared to be one which would give ample room for the memorial but an inspection on the grounds showed that the place was rather secluded. Furthermore as it is off the main street it would be necessary to buy a great deal of land to protect it from intrusion by ordinary buildings, built along the side streets leading to this site. It was stated that they contemplated purchasing eighty acres. The purchase price for this land is believed to be at least ten thousand dollars an acre, and it was thought that such a tract would cost at least a million dollars. The Committee thereupon visited the proposed site on Sixteenth Street Heights just above Alaska Avenue. A careful inspection of the area was made by Mr. Akeley and Mr. Brite, as a result of which they thought their design could be adapted to the area and that it would certainly place the Roosevelt Memorial in a more fitting location considered in connection with its relation to the plan of Washington. The Committee expressed their keen appreciation of the site as they looked all the way down Sixteenth Street and saw the Washington Monument and the river seven miles distant. Late in the afternoon of the day Captain Archie Roosevelt, who happened to be in the city, accompanied the Committee to the site and expressed himself highly in favor of erecting the memorial at this location. It would be

desired to obtain about eight acres. The landscape plan would be designed so as to show a suitable approach on the north side coming from Baltimore. The Commission made the Roosevelt Memorial the subject of a careful and lengthy discussion in which the members expressed their views on the appropriateness of the site and design which would fittingly commemorate Theodore Roosevelt as one of the greatest men in American history. The present design of Mr. Akeley and Mr. Brite represents a lion in the midst of a big landscape scheme. The Commission was not prepared to say what form the central motif for this memorial at Washington should take. Mr. Greenleaf said that if it is to be a lion he believed such design would be more appropriate if carved on a mountain side in the far west, emphasizing this feature of Theodore Roosevelt's life, while some other design might more fittingly typify Theodore Roosevelt's relation to Washington. It was pointed out that the present design calls for a wooded site and would have to be modified if adapted to the proposed location on Sixteenth Street. Mr. Kendall and Mr. Pope stated that they desire to see a memorial to Theodore Roosevelt placed in proper relation to the plan of Washington and befitting the man. The Commission would be pleased to see a landscape design by Mr. Brite for the memorial adapted to the Sixteenth Street site. The Commission believe that this site is available and suitable for a memorial to commemorate Theodore Roosevelt.

12. MEADE MEMORIAL: Major Ridley reported that Simons and Simons, architects for the Meade Memorial, had forwarded two original studies, one for the plan of the Meade Memorial site, the other for the benches to be placed thereon, for the consideration of the Commission. The Commission approved the north and south walks and the design for the central plaza. The Commission advised that the east and west walks must be reduced to conform in width and character to the other Mall walks of which they will be a continuation. The design should be resubmitted showing these changes. The Commission disapproved the design for the seats. Mr. Platt advised that the seats ought to be wider, lower, not more than

eighteen inches high; the benches should be eight feet long with different shaped support. Mr. Kendall suggested no mouldings. The Commission concurred in these recommendations and requested a resubmission of the design. Major Ridley reported that he has been informed that it is the desire of the Meade Memorial Commission to secure from the Pennsylvania Legislature sufficient funds to develop the whole square in the Mall plan, and that they desire to put in the street curbs, in fact everything to complete the square. The Commission advised that they would require such plan to be in conformity with the Mall scheme. With regard to the lighting system for the Meade Memorial, Major Ridley advised that the Meade Memorial Commission will not require a special lighting scheme, that they believe the memorial is one which should be seen in the day time and they will depend upon the lighting along the Mall for illuminating the memorial.

13. AMERICAN CEMETERIES IN FRANCE: Major C. C. Pierce, Chief of the Graves Registration Service, appeared before the Commission and reported that they are expecting to receive the maps ordered from France for the proposed American Cemeteries very soon, whereupon it was hoped that members of the Commission of Fine Arts would visit France for the purpose of adopting definite plans for the development of these cemeteries. Major Pierce also advised that since the last meeting of the Commission it has been decided to maintain an American National Cemetery in Great Britain near London. He said the British intend to maintain 1,700 cemeteries, one for each forty men buried in one place, but that reports indicate that they will find the maintenance of such a large number very costly. A distinctive feature of the British Cemeteries will be a Keltic cross to symbolize "sacrifice", and a large stone slab, steps and platform of approach which will serve as an altar which will be used for services as they are held there from time to time. Major Pierce advised that the British authorities will grant the United States exclusive authority for maintaining their American Cemetery. Major Pierce further reported that fully 25,000 American soldiers will remain buried in

Europe and that at the recent meeting of the War Memorials Council the Council ruled (approved by the Secretary of War) that there is to be no segregation or grouping of bodies in permanent American Cemeteries overseas on the basis of military commission or military rank. In other words the graves of officers and enlisted men are to be side by side. The Commission concurred in this.

14. MARKERS FOR ABANDONED BURIAL PLACES; THE AMERICAN CEMETERIES IN FRANCE: Mr. Moore reported that at the last meeting of the War Memorials Council on November 8, 1920, the Council suggested the appropriateness of erecting tablets to commemorate the places in Europe which had served as cemeteries for American soldiers, and that the Council ruled that any marker or tablet shall be such as will have the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts. At the close of the World War there were fully 2,400 of these cemeteries which were later reduced to about 1,700 and at the present time numbers but 700. This number is to be still further reduced so that ultimately there are to be only four National Cemeteries in France and the one in England.

15. IOWA CIRCLE: A plan was submitted for the relocation of the two fountains in Iowa Circle at the head of Rhode Island Avenue, northwest, inside the outer walk of the Circle and to be located on the center line of the Avenue in each case.

Major Pierce was the guest of the Commission at luncheon at the Cosmos Club. Later in the afternoon the Commission visited the site proposed for the Roosevelt Memorial at Sixteenth Street Heights in company with Hon. Elihu Root, who had informed the Commission of his desire to see the site. Mr. Root was well pleased with the location and said that the Roosevelt Memorial located there would place it in fitting relation with the scheme of Washington.

Approved:

November 17, 1920.

Dear Senator Williams:

At the meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts held in Washington November 13th I brought to their attention the correspondence received from you concerning some sculpture by Miss Mary S. Mason, of Elmsford, New York, entitled "Pilgrim Mother and Child" and "The New Era". Since receiving this correspondence from you I had inquiry made at the Capitol regarding bills on these matters, and the records failed to disclose any bills introduced in Congress concerning these statues. I reported this fact to the Commission in submitting the correspondence and they were of the opinion that in advance of such action they could only express their entire willingness to give consideration to the work when it comes before them.

They wish me to thank you for submitting the correspondence.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) C. S. Ridley

Major, Corps of Engineers,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Hon. John Sharp Williams,

United States Senate.

CSR:HPC
FHC

EXHIBIT A.

November 16, 1920.

My dear Mr. Ambassador:

Unofficially a proposition has been placed before the Commission of Fine Arts to erect, in connection with the Japanese cherry trees presented by the Mayor of Tokio to the City of Washington, a tablet suitably inscribed.

The Commission welcome the idea, and suggest as a location, subject to the approval of Congress, a space along the canal which is to connect the Potomac River with the Washington Channel in East Potomac Park. A diagram of the site is furnished herewith.

The Commission suggest that the monument take a form distinctly Japanese, and be executed by a Japanese artist. Tentatively the suggestion was made that something in the shape of a Japanese garden lantern of stone would be suitable. This Commission appreciate the suggestion, and will do everything in their power to bring about a happy result.

Very respectfully,

(signed) Charles Moore.

To His Excellency
The Ambassador of Japan.

EXHIBIT B.

November 16, 1920.

Dear Colonel Lawton:

The plan submitted by you for the treatment of the grounds appertaining to the Custis Mansion at Arlington was approved by the Commission of Fine Arts at its meeting on November 13th.

The Commission presume that the plan will be submitted for approval to the Quartermaster General and the Secretary of War, and that when so approved it will become the official plan, so that all future work for the improvement of that area will be done in accordance with it.

I am transmitting a copy of the plan, showing the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) C. S. Ridley,

Major, Corps of Engineers,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

Colonel F. H. Lawton,
Quartermaster Corps,
Depot Quartermaster,
War Department,
Washington, D. C.

CSR:HPC
FHC

WASHINGTON, D. C.

November 17, 1920.

Dear Colonel Kutz:

With reference to your letter of the 9th instant concerning a proposal to place a sign on the parking in front of St. John's Church, I have to advise you that I brought this matter to the attention of the Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on November 13th.

The Commission does not favor the placing of a sign on the parking in front of the Church. The Commission could not approve the location of structures that would impair the vistas along the streets. While the records of the Commission do not disclose any reference of the matter of a sign on St. John's Church itself, it is suggested that if a frame or tablet is to be placed on the Church, such tablet be designed by the architects who recently restored the Church, otherwise the very result attained is apt to be impaired.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) C. S. Ridley,

Major, Corps of Engineers,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

Colonel C. W. Kutz,
Corps of Engineers, U.S.A.,
Engineer Commissioner, D.C.,
Washington, D. C.

CSR:HPC
FHC

EXHIBIT D.

November 16, 1920.

Dear Professor Kendall:

The Commission at their meeting on November thirteenth received your communication stating that you felt it impossible to give to the work the attention required, and therefore, you asked to withdraw. The Commission reluctantly accede.

I would suggest that you place your resignation in the hands of the Commission to be delivered to the President when the name of your successor shall have been agreed to for recommendation to the President. Of course your resignation should be addressed to the President.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) C. S. Ridley,

Major, Corps of Engineers,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

Wm. Sergeant Kendall, Esq.,
Yale University,
New Haven, Connecticut.

CSR:HPC
FHC

EXHIBIT E.